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ABSTRACT

In 1983, the Syracuse All-University Gerontology Center (AUGC) began to offer computer classes to older adults. In starting what is now called the Computers and the Elderly Program, AUGC's director and assistant director sought advice from the Syracuse University Elders Council, comprised of older alumni, who were also among the first class participants. An important part of the program was research regarding the impact of computer use on the elderly. As the demand for instruction grew, the program expanded in two directions. In 1985, the local school district and the AUGC collaborated in arranging for older adult volunteers, who had received computer training themselves, to teach elementary school children how to use a computer. Also in 1985, negotiations began for AUGC to become an original SeniorNet site; the actual site designation was granted in May 1986. SeniorNet was a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco that operated a computer network for older adults. This network linked elders at many geographically dispersed sites, where they received training and had access to computers. When AUGC administrative headquarters was moved in Spring 1988, the Computers and the Elderly Program was adopted by the Kellogg Project. Before the Kellogg Project ended in 1991, a new home was found for the Computers and the Elderly Program in the Wagon Wheel Senior Center. (YLB)

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# The Computers and the Elderly Program at Syracuse University: A History

By Ollie Owen
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## ABSTRACT

This is a history of the Computers and the Elderly Program, an effort to involve elders in the computer revolution. It describes the development of the Program from its inception in 1983 at Syracuse University's All-University Gerontology Center. In 1988, the Syracuse University Kellogg Project adopted the Program and administered it until the Project ended in August 1991 after which the Computers and the Elderly Program again moved to a new home.

# SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY KELLOGG PROJECT
# COMPUTERS AND THE ELDERLY PROGRAM

## OVERVIEW

In 1983 the Syracuse University All-University Gerontology Center (AUGC) began to offer computer classes to older adults. The Gerontology Center's director, Neal S. Bellos, and assistant director, Maureen Goodman, were among the first to appreciate the importance of giving older adults the opportunity to become computer literate. In starting what is now called the Computers and the Elderly Program, they sought advice from the Syracuse University Elders Council, comprised of older alumni, who were also among the first class participants.

As the demand for instruction grew, the Program expanded in two directions. In 1985 the local school district and the AUGC collaborated in arranging for older adult volunteers, who had received computer training themselves, to teach elementary school children how to use a computer. Also in 1985, negotiations began for the Gerontology Center to become an original SeniorNet site, the actual site designation being granted in May 1986. SeniorNet is a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco that operates a computer network for older adults. That network links elders at many geographically dispersed sites, where they receive training and have access to computers.

In the spring of 1988 the University moved the administrative headquarters of the AUGC from the School of Social Work to the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, where it would become a strictly research-oriented Center. The Computers and the Elderly Program, which was primarily practice-orientated, no longer fit within the Gerontology Center, so it was adopted by the Kellogg Project, an adult education project in the School of Education. The Project, designed to promote information access and exchange through the innovative use of computer technologies, made a good home for the Computers and the Elderly Program. Furthermore, by this time Maureen Goodman, who had developed, supervised, and coordinated the Program in her former position as assistant director of the Gerontology Center, had become co-

director of the Kellogg Project. Thus under different auspices she could continue to guide the Program's development.

Before the Kellogg Project ended on August 31, 1991, Goodman, after an extensive search of the local community, found a new home for the Computers and the Elderly Program. Starting September 1991, the Program will be located at the Wagon Wheel Senior Center and jointly administered by Wagon Wheel and by LeMoyne College's Continuous Learning Center.

In this report an account of the beginnings of the Computers and the Elderly Program, will be followed by two major sections, one on the School Program and the other on SeniorNet.

## COMPUTER CLASSES FOR ELDERS

### A New Interest in Computers and Older Persons

Back in 1983, very few older persons were familiar with computers, and the Gerontology Center wanted to give them opportunities, through the use of computers, to broaden their horizons through social interactions, to develop new skills, and to become part of the information age, which depends so much on new technologies. Although our society tends to leave the elderly in the wake of such developments, older persons stand to gain much from the use of computers, which can empower the frail, offer new challenges and new information to the retired, and involve the isolated in computer-mediated communities. Computers can also give elders new opportunities to contribute to society.

There were other professionals who shared the Center's interests. In the summer of 1983, Director Neal S. Bellos, along with Professors Iseli Krauss and William J. Hoyer of Syracuse University's psychology department, attended the first NATO Symposium on Technology and Older Persons. The meeting convened from August 22 to 26 at the Ethel Percy Andrus Gerontology Center of the University of California. Supported by the NATO Special Programs Panel on Human Factors, it was the first major gathering to discuss the potential of technology for the elderly. The participants were divided into four study groups to discuss the following topics: (a) Aging and Labor Force Participation, (b) Aging, Health and Stress, (c) Human Factors, and (d) Changes in Home and Community Environments. In the panel on Human Factors, Drs. Krauss and

Hoyer delivered a presentation on "High Technology and the Older Person: Age and Experience as Moderators of Attitudes Towards Computers." According to Dr. Bellos, the symposium served as a prologue to the Computers and the Elderly Program.

**Getting Started**

When the time came to purchase equipment for the Computers and the Elderly Program, a committee of five, which included the director and assistant director of the AUGC and three members of the Elders Council, explored the possibilities. The Gerontology Center could afford to buy one computer. The committee began a three-month search, visiting each computer store in the area. At the same time, Barbara Florini, a staff person at the Center for Instructional Development (and later a co-director of the Kellogg Project), developed a simplified manual on operating the Apple Computer. Based on their own findings and Florini's research, the committee decided to buy an Apple Computer. However, that decision was preempted when the University administration decided to institute the use of IBM computers.

Once an IBM computer was installed, a few members of the Elders Council began to learn word processing. One council member, with aspirations to teach in the school program, withdrew in frustration with the learning process. However, he recommended that his neighbors, Howard and Dorothy Hamm, take his place. Mr. Hamm is a retired electrical engineer and his wife is a retired Methodist minister. They fit well into the Computers and the Elderly Program. They spent considerable time from September 1983 to June 1984 practicing on the IBM and interacting with Center staff. They were named volunteer coordinators of the Program and became active members of the Elders Council. Thus began a rewarding, long-term relationship between this couple and the staff of the Gerontology Center.

Later the Graduate School gave the Gerontology Center a small grant to buy computers. The Center was allowed to purchase twenty Commodore computers, along with twenty modems and twenty telephones, two printers, and a monitor. At the time it seemed sensible to buy inexpensive cassette tapes rather than hard drives for data storage, thus saving money to buy more computers. However, this decision eventually proved to have been a mistake.

An important part of the Program was research regarding the impact of computer use on the elderly. The Gerontology Center placed the twenty

Commodore microcomputers in the homes of the members of the Elders Council and in two large multiservice senior centers so that two faculty members affiliated with the Gerontology Center could study the way these computers were actually used.

Each recipient of a computer received instructions at the Gerontology Center and assistance at home in setting up the computers and modems. Their own television screens served as monitors and the modems were connected to touchtone telephones. According to Howard Hamm, it was very difficult to use the telephones and modems with the unreliable cassette tapes, used instead of hard disks for storing data. In spite of this, students were able to get comfortable with the computers, and some of them were able to access the online catalog at Syracuse University's Bird Library and to exchange electronic mail with the Gerontology Center. An important part of this phase was that the elders began using computers and, with one exception, those who did have "computer phobia" were able to leave it behind.

A new trend started when an Elder Council member donated a hard disk to the program. Then the Center director received one as a gift, and Howard Hamm purchased one on his own. The hard disks made it easier to use the computers and the modems.

When the research by the two faculty members was completed, members of the Council of Elders and the two senior centers were asked to return the Commodore computers to the Center for use in training. The senior centers did not wish to give up the computers. The decision was made to allow the Wagon Wheel Senior Center to keep one because there was administrative support for training activities and because the computer was in constant use However, this was not the case at the Salvation Army Senior Center, which did not have enough staff resources to adequately supervise and train voluneers.

In the meantime, as the research results were being evaluated by graduate assistants, Maureen Goodman asked Howard Hamm if he would be willing to volunteer as a teacher (Mr. Hamm previously had taught in a continuing education computer program in the community). He began to teach members of the Elders Council and in 1985, when the intergenerational school system plan surfaced, Maureen Goodman invited interested older persons of Onondaga County to receive training, joining members of the Elders Council.

During this time, Assistant Director Goodman personally supervised each stage of the operations. From November 1985 to June of 1986 she kept a journal

with copious notes on the structure and content of the classes being taught, and on her regular contacts with the public schools as the school program got underway.

**Research at the All-University Gerontology Center**

As previously stated, the Commodore computers had been loaned for research purposes to older persons, including members of the Elders Council and of computer classes. In 1986 eleven computer-class participants–five males and six females–agreed to answer a questionnaire regarding computer hardware and features they had found especially helpful or unhelpful. Dr. Bellos was interviewed for the June 28, 1984 issue of *The Syracuse Record* in which he explained the purpose behind the research as follows:

> By monitoring the progress and preferences of the elderly users, the center will identify and advertise every way in which the computer can play a role in the senior citizen's life. After closely watching senior citizens who are introduced to computers, the center hopes to develop a course of computer instruction suited to the elderly. 'Computer phobia' is particularly prevalent in this group. Once elders are using the equipment, the center will undertake the broad task of evaluating existing and proposed software. This pursuit includes, as one example, the development of special computer games which accommodate the limitations of old age. It includes some novel applications for the elderly as well: programs and networks which would promote interaction by otherwise isolated people, and programs which compensate for memory loss and changes in cognitive abilities.

The article went on to say, "Ultimately, Prof. Bellos hopes to witness the creation of a social service network linked directly to microcomputers in the homes of the elderly. With a microcomputer at hand, the senior citizen would have direct access to health and emergency agencies."

Bellos thought that once the relevance of computers to the elderly was established, the AUGC would encourage both public agencies and private businesses to consider senior citizens in their plans. He hoped that owning a microcomputer would become as important to elders (even those on a limited income) as owning a television set, especially as prices for computers continued to drop. Bellos closed the article by stating, "In traditional, primitive society, older people were the 'computers of society.' They were the repositories of

knowledge and the transmitters of culture. The irony of modern life is that elders have lost that function. It's nice to think about trying to redress that imbalance."

In 1987, a paper was written by Swapna Mukhopadhyay, a graduate assistant, and Iseli Krauss, a psychology professor, entitled "Older Adults' Evaluation of Computer Hardware and Manuals."

## SCHOOL PROGRAM

### Background

The original impetus for the school program came in the spring of 1985 when a mother, who was head of a parent-teacher organization in the Bellevue School, expressed concern about the lack of computer education in the school. She was referred to Neal Bellos by his next-door neighbor. This referral expedited contacts with the Syracuse Public School System, which showed immediate interest in an intergenerational computer program. It was decided that older adult volunteers from the Gerontology Center's Computers and the Elderly Program would work with children at Webster and Bellevue Schools.

The first phase of the school program began in November 1985 with an orientation meeting. There were seven volunteers in attendance. Howard Hamm and Maureen Goodman described the proposed training project. The older persons would learn how to use the computer for their own use; in addition, those who wanted to teach in the school program would be able to start once they completed their own training. There were two teachers, Howard Hamm and Maryanne Beatenes, a young woman with an MSW and an interest in older adults and computers. She volunteered to teach the first classes, which were held on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Maureen Goodman assumed administration of the school effort and has continued in that capacity through changes in location and administration of that program. Dorothy and Howard Hamm became the school volunteer coordinators, working with Goodman and two graduate assistants, Jan Tewes and Ollie Owen. The Hamms have been in the unique position of being active members of the Gerontology Center's Elders Council and being active volunteers at the same time.

During the summer and fall of 1985, a group of older adults were recruited and trained to use the kind of computer and software programs that would be used with children in the schools. Meanwhile, the school system, with a one-time state legislative grant, built an addition to Webster School to be used as a computer room. It adjoins the library, which is fortunate because the school librarian, Joan Green, has been an important member of the Webster team. Although one volunteer has been stationed at the Bellevue School, working with the school children in a regular classroom environment, most volunteers have taught at Webster school because of the convenience of a separate computer room.

The room was completed and the equipment in place in March 1986. Twelve Apple computers and other equipment were removed from boxes and set up by staff and volunteers from the Gerontology Center. On March 14 the Hamms, Goodman, and five volunteers tried out the computers using the Apple practice disk. Another practice session was scheduled for the next week. Goodman and the volunteers also met with the first grade teacher before actual classes. All agreed that the interaction with the children was as important as what was actually taught.

On March 25 ten children from the first grade were welcomed to the computer room. They, and subsequent groups, were introduced to their computer elders and shown how to act around computers. Each volunteer worked with two children, one at a time, for twenty minutes each. At first Goodman made the introductions, returned the children to class, and acted as timekeeper. As the program progressed the master teachers, as Dorothy and Howard Hamm were called, assumed these tasks.

First software programs included ones that came in the computer package itself and simple computer games provided by the librarian, Joan Green. New software programs have been added as needed, including ones to help the children feel more at ease and to make the experience more fun for both children and teachers. The children were, and continue to be, taught to identify various parts of a computer system; to turn on the equipment and boot the disk programs; to find words and numbers on the keyboard, which strengthens their use of numbers and the alphabet; to use short words; to play simple letter games; and to develop skill in line drawing, math, and composing pictures with predrawn geometric shapes. Throughout the program, assistance was received

from the Syracuse school district's computer center, which donated all kinds of software as classes became more sophisticated.

During the first spring it was obvious that using Commodores at the Center and Apples at Webster School created a problem for the volunteers. Hope Golden of Bellevue school suggested that Goodman request that several Apple computers be transferred to the Gerontology Center for summer use by the volunteers. The school administration agreed to this, which gave the elders an opportunity to become more familiar with the Apple and its software.

Another event also enhanced the success of the program. Two mothers who volunteered at Webster School were interested in working with fifth graders in the fall school term. They came to the Gerontology Center and learned along with the older adults Including these young Webster mothers proved successful; however they were so talented that the school hired them as teacher aides.

Classes were scheduled to begin around the first of October 1986 and run to the end of April. This format has been adhered to through the years.

The school librarian and the principal have been a tremendous help to the program. The older adult volunteers are honored annually with other school volunteers at a special luncheon at Webster. Also, through the years the volunteers have been thanked for their good work with picnics and Christmas parties put on by the All-University Gerontology Center in conjunction with the University's Elder Council and with special luncheons provided by the Kellogg Project.

**Current Status**

The school program has continued to add new software as needed. The following word processing programs are used: Magic Slate, Kidwriter, Bank Street Writer, Words at Work-Prefix Power, The Market Place, Number Munchers, Space Subtraction, Speedway Math, Circus Math, Friendly Computer, and spelling programs. Up to the present, grades one through five have been taught in various years. Only two grades are taught during a semester. The volunteer coordinators consult with the Webster administration in selecting grades for that year, based on the size of the classes and school schedules.

For the spring semester of 1991, grades one and two were on the agenda. The average class lasts six weeks; it has twenty-four pupils divided into three groups, each of which spends one half hour with the volunteers. There are

usually three to four classes in each grade, and they meet on Mondays and Thursdays from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The young students are escorted to and from the computer room by designated volunteers. What may appear to be a menial chore often is a very important assignment and one that must be carried out with a knowledge of the school routine. Currently there are four master teachers: the Hamms; Dorothea Zito, a retired information specialist who is a former staff member of AUGC; and Al Oram, a retired engineer.

More than 1200 children have taken computer courses since the program's inception. They often express their appreciation to their volunteer teachers by giving them individual notes, poems, and drawings. With encouragement from their computer teachers, they also use word processing to write messages to their classroom teachers.

The volunteers in the program come from varied backgrounds. Their ages run from sixty-three to the early eighties, and include both men and women. Volunteers all have their own style, but each one has the one quality that is most important: they like and enjoy young children.

**Benefits of the School Program**

Learning enough about using a computer to teach the children gives the volunteers a sense of accomplishment and self esteem, even if they decide not to develop their own skills further. By acquiring a basic knowledge of computers, they also feel more a part of the world of technology.

The older persons who get involved do enjoy children; many of their comments show that they appreciate the freshness of a child's world as compared to an adult's world. The experience also prepares them to enjoy computers with their own grandchildren.

The school system benefits because, although they acknowledge the importance of exposing children to computers, they tend to lack the resources to do it. Many school teachers are themselves unfamiliar with computers; but even computer literate teachers could not successfully train and supervise some twenty children on the computer all at once--there are far too many details to cover. Children need to be taught about computers on a one-to-one or two-to-one basis.

The program introduces children in a nonthreatening way to computers. There are no demands on them to accomplish certain skills or to get a good grade. They are taught at their own pace about the areas that interest them.

Further, the classes give them individual attention from an adult, which for many children is all-too-infrequent experience.

### General Comments on the Program

This intergenerational school program has received recognition in national and local magazines and is to be written about in a book which will be published in the near future by the Maturity News Service. An article and photo also appeared recently in our local paper, the *Syracuse Herald Journal.*

It is not easy to find new volunteers today, because many older adults who retire must forego plans for volunteering and instead find paying work to supplement their retirement income. Others are kept from volunteering by the need to take care of loved ones. An example of this is when Goodman initiated a computer program at the Syracuse University Skytop Nursery Center. Three volunteers who enjoyed working with preschool children were trained at the AUGC and they successfully implemented the program for about eleven months; however, all three volunteers had to resign because of care giving responsibilities or illness. In spite of this, the School Program has managed to keep a dedicated core of volunteer teachers and to recruit new volunteers. The Webster School itself plays a pivotal role in the success of the program. A change in school principal and superintendent of schools has not had a negative influence on the project, but rather the warm school environment continues, with excellent support from the librarian and the school teachers.

Overall, this has been a wonderful, exciting, innovative program that successfully reversed the more-usual scenario in which children teach older adults the computer. In this country it was a **first** successful program using older adults to teach children. The dedication of professionals and volunteers in an elementary school setting has produced a valuable community resource, the positive effects of which will be felt throughout the community for years to come.

## SENIORNET

On May 9, 1986 the SeniorNet headquarters, located at the University of San Francisco, invited the AUGC to become an original SeniorNet site. (SeniorNet had contacted the AUGC earlier after reading an article about our school

program.) This was an exciting invitation, but for Dr. Bellos it was in a sense ironic, because as early as 1983 he too had envisioned a network that would involve the elderly as members of a computer-mediated community. Nevertheless, Bellos accepted the birth of SeniorNet with grace and excitement, and he, along with Maureen Goodman and Rose Tout, secretary to Dr. Bellos, worked hard to make the Syracuse University site operational.

What is SeniorNet and how did it get started? In one of its early publications, SeniorNet describes itself as follows: "SeniorNet is a research study being conducted by the Center for Instruction and Technology at the University of San Francisco. The purpose of SeniorNet is to study the potential impact of computer networks on the lives of senior citizens."

Founded in 1986, SeniorNet sprang from a computer class and a book called *Computers for Kids Over 60*, which Mary Furlong, director of SeniorNet, wrote with Greg Kearsley. Mary Furlong, a professor of education in the Center for Instruction and Technology at the University of San Francisco, recognized the need for a national network of elderly computer users when she received numerous responses to this book.

The administration of the University supported the idea of a research project based on such a network, and a grant proposal to New York's Markle Foundation (which has by now donated $700,000 to SeniorNet) was funded. A small staff was hired to work with graduate students on this new venture, the first nationwide effort to help older adults participate in the telecommunications revolution. The Apple Computer Corporation donated $200,000 in computers to equip eleven SeniorNet sites. Syracuse University received a Macintosh Plus, an Apple IIc, an ImageWriter II printer, and modems.

Once a site was established, representatives from SeniorNet would train potential older adult users and staff. Mary Furlong and Greg Kearsley led the training at the Syracuse University site in the Gerontology Center. They gave a fine presentation to fifteen older adults, the Hamms, and the AUGC staff. After the presentation, those interested in the project were scheduled to begin their training on June 23, 1986. That gave the Hamms time to orient themselves to the equipment, so they in turn could teach the others. Goodman and the Hamms at this time were named coordinators of the Syracuse University SeniorNet site, a position they have held to the present.

Unlike other new SeniorNet sites, the Gerontology Center already had a curriculum for an eight-week computer course. SeniorNet therefore allowed

the Center to use its own curriculum, incorporating SeniorNet techniques when feasible. Over the years, the Syracuse University site and the parent headquarters in San Francisco have continued to maintain this spirit of cooperation and harmony.

Through their participation in SeniorNet, elders in the Syracuse area can now connect with 40 other sites in the United States and Canada, and they can access information on a variety of topics including legislative, financial, and health issues.

Today, there are 4,000 SeniorNet members, including a growing number of independent members who use their own computers at home. In 1990 SeniorNet became a nonprofit organization, independent of the University of San Francisco. Although the Markle Foundation's support ended, SeniorNet has attracted new support from the Pacific Telesis Group, Pacific Bell, and other utility companies across the United States.

Sites today include senior centers, universities, community colleges, adult vocational centers, eye care institutes, and nursing homes. One drawback is that SeniorNet sites cost $15,000 to $20,000 to equip. Many community organizations that want to join lack the necessary start-up funds. According to several surveys, older adults are among the lowest users of computers, mostly because of the cost and, in less metropolitan areas, lack of exposure. Nevertheless, the number of sites and of individual members continues to increase.

With the Hamms and Goodman as coordinators, the new classes began using telecommunications with gusto. Each site was given free online time for classes and for communication among teachers and staff of the AUGC. SeniorNet headquarters distributed newsletters with calendars of events, which included conference calls in which each site's coordinator got online simultaneously to talk with each other and with San Francisco. There were conferences addressing questions of interest, special election polls around the first Tuesday in November, features on retirement issues, and a "Dear Sam" advice column. Special online conferences were set up with another original site, the Callahan Senior Center in Framingham, Massachusetts, to exchange tips on using various software programs. Participants at both sites discovered a common interest in genealogy, which they pursued via telecommunications.

During the remainder of 1986 and into 1987, the Hamms were joined by a new volunteer, Al Oram, who knew the Commodore system, owned his own computer, and was willing to teach. He did–and he still does, with a

knowledgeable, caring style.

During this period, federal funds for research centers like the Gerontology Center became much less accessible. Enrollments in schools of social work went down as enrollments in schools of business and management went way up. The Center lost three staff members and several graduate assistants. Only the director, assistant director, director's secretary, a part-time information specialist, and one graduate student remained. In late fall of 1986 the assistant director, Maureen Goodman, moved across campus to join the Kellogg Project, ultimately becoming co-director. However, she continued to maintain ties with the Gerontology Center and SeniorNet.

In the spring of 1988 the University decided to move the AUGC to the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, where it was to become strictly a research-centered program with a new director from Maxwell. As mentioned previously, the Computers and Elderly Program did not fit within the new context.

Dr. Bellos then had to decide what to do with this innovative program which was becoming increasingly interesting to older adults in the community. This was the period in the eighties when the "young old," was identified as a distinct group. These older men and women generally were keen on computers and not afraid of them. Some wanted to be computer literate so they could relate with their grandchildren; others just wanted to be able to function in the information age.

In July of 1988, the AUGC discussed the future of the Computers and the Elderly Program with Maureen Goodman. She met with Roger Hiemstra, who at that time co-directed the Kellogg Project with Goodman, and they agreed that the Kellogg Project would take over the administration of the Program. They gave Ollie Owen, a Kellogg Project graduate assistant, responsibility for coordinating the Program under Goodman's supervision. Owen moved into the Gerontology Center office, which was still physically located in the School of Social Work.

Classes were scheduled for the fall of 1988, and a new teacher, Dorothea Zito, was recruited. She had served as an information specialist for the Gerontology Center for many years. An accomplished professional, Zito had a solid background in computer use and had considerable experience working as a volunteer in the Webster School program. Zito and Oram taught on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. They each had their own

syllabi, as well as SeniorNet manuals for their eight-week courses. At the start of each class, they introduced participants to SeniorNet, giving them the opportunity to join the network. Later in the course the instructors held an online session, and the older adults were told how to get online accounts. The fee to join SeniorNet at that time was $10 for an individual and $15 for a couple. (SeniorNet has always stated that if a hardship exists, the fee is negotiable.)

Evaluations were devised and distributed at the last class, and meetings were held, with teachers, coordinators, and Ollie Owen in attendance, to analyze the results and to make changes based on the comments of class participants. A frequent request on the evaluations was more time on the computer to practice word processing. Howard and Dorothy Hamm responded by offering an intermediate word processing course to those who had completed the beginners classes.

It was discovered that most older adults did not have their own computers. With limited opportunities to practice, people had trouble retaining what they learned in class. Owen made them aware of opportunities to practice at the Wagon Wheel and at various Onondaga County Public Libraries. From the latter she obtained a list of computer types, locations, and times of availability. In addition, she she set up practice sessions at the Center.

## THE PROGRAM'S CONCLUSION

In late fall of 1989 the Computers and the Elderly Program had to move out of the Gerontology Center location in the School of Social Work and relocate to the Kellogg Project facility. Teachers and students successfully adapted to the new environment. When, in late February of 1991, Owen had emergency open-heart surgery, the Project' s secretarial staff assumed many of her duties. (It is important to mention how much the support staff at the Kellogg Project has given to the Computers and the Elderly Program. They have always been available when needed and have served with common sense and intelligence.)

In October of 1990, the Computers and the Elderly Program moved yet again. This time, the entire Kellogg Project relocated to Lyman Hall on campus. Goodman made sure that the Computers and the Elderly Program had adequate quarters. In fact, the older adult part of the program ended up with the best location it has ever had, and this was deeply appreciated by the teachers and the

trainees. When the last classes ended in April 1991, the participants were disappointed that they could not continue with Howard Hamm's intermediate class in word processing; but they were urged to continue to practice at the Wagon Wheel Senior Center and at the public libraries. They were also informed of the diligent effort in process to move the Program to a new location.

The Program formally ended with an awards luncheon for the volunteers, held at the Sheraton University Inn and Conference Center. Each volunteer was presented with a certificate of appreciation and a gift as a gesture of the Project's deep indebtedness to each one of them.

The former Gerontology Center and the Kellogg Project have been responsible for creating a computer environment that worked for older adults. The Program made a permanent mark on the volunteers, the older adult and elementary students, and the community. The Computers and the Elderly Program is what adult education is all about in the age of technology and mass information. Truly it has been a breakthrough, a technological success story of the eighties and early nineties that points toward the twenty-first century.

Ollie Owen